



NATIONAL MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

Mentors Online: The E-mentoring Tool Kit™ Fact Sheet

<http://www.mentoring.org/mentorsonline>

What is E-mentoring? Online mentoring, or e-mentoring, is a mentoring relationship conducted via the Internet. E-mail can be the exclusive vehicle for young people and mentors to connect or it can be an additional communication tool for those who ordinarily meet in person. Either way, e-mentoring shares the goal of face-to-face mentoring: establishing a trusting, nurturing, positive relationship between the mentor and a young person.

Building a Responsible E-mentoring Program. Organizing and administering a responsible e-mentoring program requires no less effort than conducting a traditional mentoring program. *Elements of Effective Practice for E-mentoring* should be incorporated into the effort - orientation and training for mentors and youth; screening and matching; ongoing support for the mentor pairs. To help more organizations take advantage of e-mentoring opportunities, AOL Time Warner Foundation in collaboration with MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership and *PEOPLE Magazine*, developed *Mentors Online: The E-mentoring Tool Kit™*. The Tool Kit addresses the technological needs of e-mentoring so program coordinators can concentrate on the most critical components of mentoring — ensuring young people and volunteers have a safe, productive and mutually satisfying experience.

Mentors Online - A New Resource to Support E-mentoring. The Tool Kit provides the resources your organization needs to allow mentors and young people to connect via the exchange of e-mails:

- **Software** that provides a secure online environment for mentoring and youth e-mail exchanges
- Archiving and administrative **tools** for simple program management and evaluation
- Customizable **web sites** for mentors and mentees featuring training, activities and tips
- Printable **journals** that can be used by mentees to keep a record of their exchanges
- A Program Coordinator's **Guide** with step-by-step instructions for using the Tool Kit and running your e-mentoring program

Mentors Online Supports Mentors and Youth Who Meet Exclusively Online as Well as Those Who Meet in Person. Schools, nonprofit youth service

organizations, businesses or any organization interested in e-mentoring can use Mentors Online to start an e-mentoring program or to enhance an existing in-person or online program. If mentors and young people in an existing face-to-face mentoring program are already exchanging e-mails through personal accounts, applying Mentors Online will provide an extra measure of support, safety and accountability for participants.

Mentors Online Software. The software itself is free, but organizations must be licensed to use it. Any organization may apply for a Tool Kit license by submitting a completed application form and a \$100 application fee. The application asks an organization to describe how it will use the Tool Kit, to provide documentation on its IT environment, and to demonstrate that it will adhere to MENTOR's *Elements of Effective Practice for E-mentoring* when using Mentors Online. Once the application process is complete and MENTOR has granted approval, the organization can use the Tool Kit.

National E-mentoring Clearinghouse – <http://www.mentoring.org/emc>

Through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, MENTOR created the National E-mentoring Clearinghouse, a centralized repository of information, training, standards and technical assistance on how to start and maintain safe, responsible and effective online mentoring programs for young people and adults.

Whether you are launching a new program or looking for ways to improve your existing e-mentoring efforts, the Clearinghouse has several resources that can help.

Training and ongoing support of participants is vital to any mentoring initiative's success. To support the e-mentoring organization in these efforts, the Clearinghouse provides online training for both e-mentors and e-mentees. Organizations can use the trainings and link to them via your Web site. For information on customizing the training for your program, contact wnilsestuen@mentoring.org.